Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts

2011-2012 Midterm

9th Grade English

* Below are three essay questions. You must **CHOOSE TWO** to answer the day of your midterm.
* You are allowed to bring an outline, the text(s), or any other notes to the midterm to help you write the essays. You may not bring fully-written essays or parts of essays.
* You will have 125 minutes to complete both essays.

1. The villain, or antagonist, of a narrative is the person or thing that opposes the hero. It is safe to say that John Proctor is the hero of *The Crucible*. If Proctor is the hero, **who or what** is the villain of *The Crucible*? You must support your answer with at least three examples from the play. Your examples must show how the person or thing you choose opposes the hero.

2. In this essay, you are to write as if you are Ben Franklin and your goal is write your reaction to the events of *The Crucible*. How would you (Ben Franklin) react to the accusations, the interrogations, the trials, and/or the punishments? Here is your hint: Since you are not Ben Franklin and you cannot communicate with his ghost, a great place to start would be Franklin’s 13 virtues. Think about which virtues, if used during the witch hunt, might have prevented this disaster. Write your (Franklin’s) reaction to at least three different events from *The Crucible*.

3. Below are four different answers to the question “What is the American Dream?” given by people from very different backgrounds. Read through each answer. In your essay, write about two ideas you agree with and two ideas you disagree with. For each idea, **tell me why** you agree or disagree with each idea. You may use your own personal experiences to explain why you agree or disagree with each idea.

**What is the American Dream?**

* Dr. Maya Angelou is a poet,educator,historian,best-selling author,actress,playwright,civil-rights activist,producer and director. She is the author of books includingI Know Why the Caged Bird Sings,A Song Flung up to Heavenand The Heart of a Woman.

“The American Dream, whether attainable or not, is to have freedom, freedom in all things. To go as far as ambition impels us, in work, in play, and religion and even in love.

I think that is what sent the first pioneers away from Europe and caused them to struggle with the Native Americans here and caused them to bring people, unwillingly from Africa, to indulge in slavery, and it is what caused the slaves to struggle against slavery.

Everyone is looking for freedom, freedom to live their lives, to control their own destiny.”

--Interviewed by Evelyn Rusli

* Tyra Banks is one of the world's most recognized supermodelsandthe creator, host and executive producer of both reality-TV hitAmerica's Next Top Modeland daytime syndicated talk showThe Tyra Banks Show.

“The American Dream is about fulfilling your potential to the max. It’s not a chase for material goods, it's about learning what inspires you in life and creating a plan to turn it into your life's work.

The way to achieve the Dream is to follow the plan and pay attention to the details because it's those details that make or break you. I look at young girls in the world today and I know every single one of them has the potential to make anything happen in their lives.

I guess I'm traditional in that I believe hard work and determination have a lot to do with achieving one's dreams. When I was a model, my dream was to have a talk show, so I made a plan to do it--and look at me now. From model to talk show host, anything is possible with a plan. So stand up, be counted and make a difference in the world. The world is waiting for you.”

--Interviewed by Hitha Prabhakar

* Actor John Leguizamo won an Emmy Award for the Spike Lee-directed presentation of his Tony-nominated Broadway solo show "Freak," and has received accolades for his performance in movies includingMoulin Rouge.He recently penned an autobiographical memoir,Pimps, Hos, Playa Hatas and All the Rest of My Hollywood Friends.

“The American Dream is full of loopholes and contradictions, but America is still the only place where you can start with nothing and end up having everything ... however, there are some rules. Be sure to be self-made, but come from a good family. Or, it's even better if you come from humble beginnings and make it huge; but then let us knock you down so we can build ya up again. It's anything goes--as long as you are successful. And you can't be too successful as long as you are humble and make everyone feel you are equal.”

--Interviewed By Miriam Marcus

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* *Frank McCourt was born in 1930 in Brooklyn, N.Y., to Irish immigrant parents, grew up in Limerick, Ireland, and returned to America in 1949. For 30 years he taught in New York City high schools. His first book,*Angela’s Ashes,*won the Pulitzer Prize, the National Book Critics Circle Award and the* L.A. Times*Book Award.*

“The American Dream boils down to self knowledge. As the poet said, ‘Know thyself’; that's what matters in the long run. You can be a *Forbes* billionaire and know nothing about yourself.

After my 30 years of teaching in the classroom and writing a few books, I discovered that's what I needed all this time. There was somebody who told me this when I was 18 or 19, that the main thing is to know yourself and to be somehow secure in yourself.

I like an illustration I saw once in a volume of the *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, where there's a kid sitting under a tree dangling a line into the Mississippi. He was just sitting there, doing nothing, and that's something we need to do more of--to sit and do nothing, and dream, and to follow that dream.”

--Interviewed by Mary Crane